

Message Text

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TO AMEMBASSY ATHENS PRIORITY

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C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 235629

EXDIS

E.O.11652:GDS

SUBJECT: GREEK AMBASSADOR'S CALL ON SISCO

1. ON INSTRUCTIONS FROM FOREIGN MINISTER BITSIOS, GREEK AMBASSADOR ALEXANDRAKIS CALLED ON SISCO OCTOBER 24, PRIMARILY TO DISCUSS TIMING OF UNGA DEBATE ON CYPRUS. (STABLER WAS ALSO PRESENT.) ACCORDING TO ALEXANDRAKIS, GOG VIEW IS THAT DEBATE WILL NOT HELP IN PROMOTING CYPRUS SETTLEMENT, BUT AS IT MUST BE HELD SOONER OR LATER, IT IS PREFERABLE TO CLEAR THE ATMOSPHERE AND GET THE DISCUSSION OUT OF THE WAY. ALSO IT IS DOUBTFUL THAT GOC WILL AGREE TO A POSTPONEMENT. THEREFORE, GOG FAVORS HOLDING DEBATE AS SCHEDULED.

2. IN RESPONSE, SISCO INDICATED THAT WE HAD JUST RECEIVED A MESSAGE ON THIS SUBJECT FROM AMBASSADOR KUBISCH AND THAT WE UNDERSTAND CLEARLY THE GOG POSITION. OUR THINKING ON DELAYING THE UN DISCUSSION ON CYPRUS HAS BEEN PRIMARILY INFLUENCED BY THE DESIRE TO AVOID AN ACRIMONIOUS DEBATE ON THE EVE OF A TRIP BY THE SECRETARY TO ANKARA. SUCH
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A DEBATE COULD MAKE MORE DIFFICULT THE SECRETARY'S GOAL

TO GET A NEGOTIATING PROCESS UNDERWAY BY OBTAINING

UNILATERAL CONCESSIONS FROM THE TURKS. TWO OTHER FACTORS HAVE EMERGED TO COMPLICATE HIS ACHIEVING THIS GOAL I.E. (A) THE INTERNAL POLITICAL PROBLEMS OF ECEVIT AND (B) THE CONGRESSIONAL ACTION ON MILITARY ASSISTANCE TO TURKEY. SISCO DIGRESSED MOMENTARILY AT THIS POINT TO STATE THAT THE TALKS IN NEW YORK BETWEEN THE SECRETARY AND MAVROS AND BETWEEN OTHER MEMBERS OF THE TWO DELEGATIONS HAD BEEN USEFUL, THAT WE UNDERSTAND THE DELICACY OF THE GREEK DOMESTIC SITUATION, AND THAT WE WANT TO BE HELPFUL TO KARAMANLIS IN THE HOPE HE WILL RECEIVE A STRONG MANDATE IN THE ELECTIONS. RETURNING TO THE SUBJECT OF THE UN DEBATE ON CYPRUS, SISCO TOLD ALEXANDRAKIS THAT THE GOG HAS MADE CLEAR ITS VIEW AGAINST ANY POSTPONEMENT OF THE DEBATE AND THAT WE WILL TAKE THIS VIEW FULLY INTO ACCOUNT. BOTH SISCO AND STABLER INDICATED THAT THEY BELIEVE THE DEBATE WILL BE HELD AS SCHEDULED.

3. ALEXANDRAKIS ALSO RAISED ON INSTRUCTIONS STATEMENT ALLEGEDLY MADE BY THE SECRETARY IN ALGIERS TO THE EFFECT THAT HE HOPED THE GOG WOULD BE ABLE FACE THE CYPRUS SITUATION "REALISTICALLY" AFTER THE NOVEMBER 17 ELECTIONS. BITSIOS ASKED, ACCORDING TO ALEXANDRAKIS, WHETHER THE SECRETARY MEANT THAT THE GOG WAS NOT NOW VIEWING THE PROBLEM "REALISTICALLY." SISCO DENIED THAT SECRETARY HAD MADE ANY SUCH STATEMENT. ON GENERAL QUESTION OF GREEK-TURKISH RELATIONS, SISCO EXPRESSED VIEW THAT ECEVIT BELIEVES IN NEED FOR GOOD RELATIONS BETWEEN GREECE AND TURKEY AND, THEREFORE, RECOGNIZED NO SETTLEMENT OF CYPRUS ISSUE CAN ENDURE IF IT INVOLVES A HUMILIATION OF GREECE. ALEXANDRAKIS DID NOT DISPUTE SISCO'S COMMENTS ON ECEVIT, BUT REITERATED WIDESPREAD GREEK VIEW THAT THERE ARE IMPORTANT EXPANSIONIST ELEMENTS IN TURKEY.

4. IN RESPONSE TO QUESTION BY SISCO ON GREEK POLITICAL SITUATION, ALEXANDRAKIS SAID THAT HE IS CONFIDENT KARAMANLIS' NEW DEMOCRACY WILL BE THE STRONGEST PARTY, BUT DOUBTS HE CAN WIN A MAJORITY OF THE VOTES. STABLER NOTED IN PASSING THAT WE HAD NOT FOUND HELPFUL THE RECENT CONFIDENTIAL

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REMARKS BY MAVROS, IN RESPONSE TO A PRESS INQUIRY, ON THE SECRETARY'S ROLE AS A MEDIATOR IN THE CYPRUS ISSUE (ATHENS 7694). ALEXANDRAKIS INDICATED THAT HE UNDERSTOOD OUR POINT OF VIEW, BUT THAT MAVROS HAD MADE HIS COMMENTS IN THE CONTEXT OF THE CURRENT ELECTORAL CAMPAIGN. INGERSOLL

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